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File Code: 3420 **Date:** October 18, 2002
Route To:

Subject: Bark Beetle Activity at Little Walnut PG and Gomez GPA

To: Gerry Engel, District Ranger, Silver City RD

OPTIONAL REPLY DUE OCTOBER 25, 2002

This letter summarizes our findings and discussions concerning the bark beetles activity and management options for the Little Walnut Picnic Area and CCC Historical Site and the Gomez Group Picnic Area we visited on Monday October 7, 2002. Bob Yost, Timber Staff, and Laura Clayton, Recreation Staff, Silver City RD, accompanied us. Because weather conditions did not allow us to conduct a thorough examination of the sites on Monday, I revisited them again on Tuesday morning, October 8.

As we discussed, the tree mortality occurring at Little Walnut Picnic Area and CCC Historical Site (Figures 1 & 2) and near the Gomez Group Picnic Area (Figure 3, below)

Figure 1. Bark beetle-killed ponderosa pine, Little Walnut PA

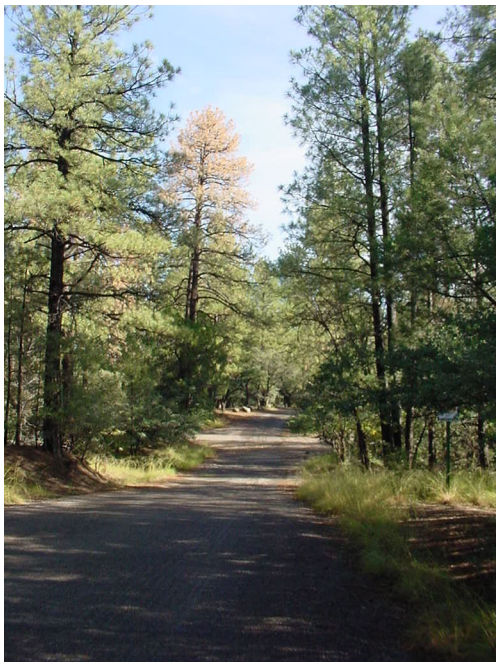

Figure 2. Bark beetle-killed ponderosa pine, Little Walnut PA

Figure 3. Bark beetle-killed ponderosa pines at the Gomez Group Picnic Area.

was caused by a combination of Western pine beetle, *Dendroctonus brevicomis*, and ips beetle, *Ips pini,* (Figure 4) attacks.

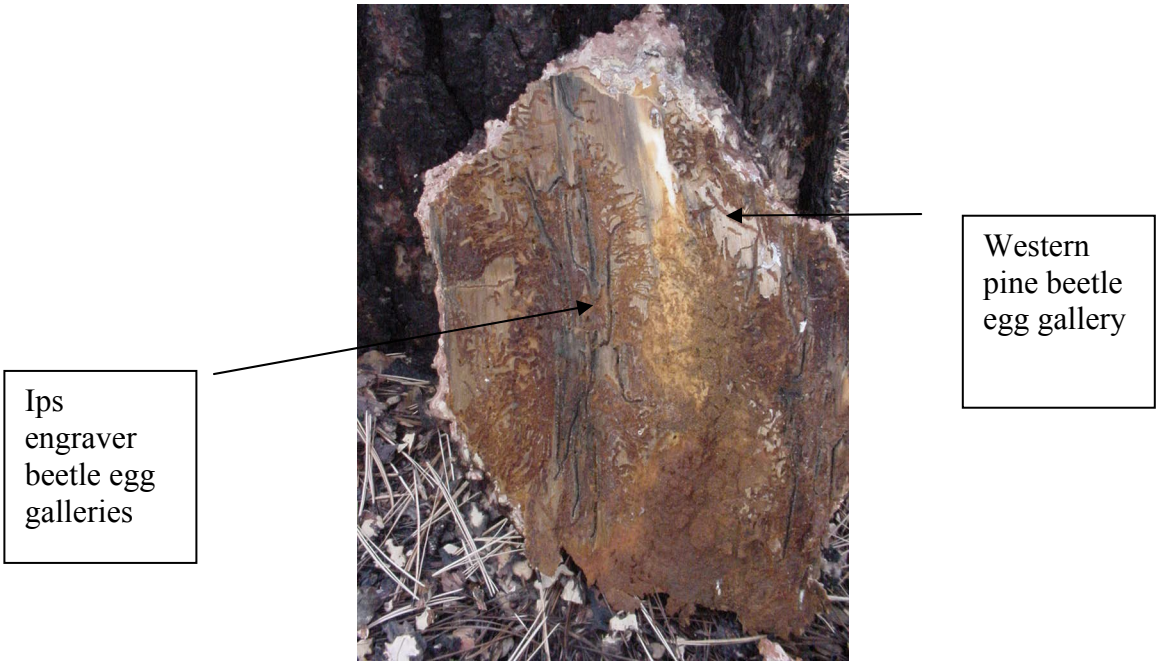

Figure 4. Inner bark of beetle infested ponderosa pine showing Western pine beetle and ips beetle egg galleries

These bark beetles generally attack and breed in trees weakened by drought, disease, or over-crowding. Several bark beetle-infested trees were found along the perimeter of the Gomez Group Picnic Area (Figure 3). Although bark beetles killed these trees, they were predisposed to attack by the droughty weather conditions we have been experiencing throughout the Southwest. I suspect that with the onset of colder weather, these beetles will over-winter in these dead trees.

Adult beetles will then begin emerging sometime next spring. Removal of bark beetle infested trees from these picnic areas will lessen the chance of these beetles attacking the neighboring un-infested trees.

Bark beetle-killed trees located near permanent structures such as toilets picnic tables, parking pads, and high use trails and roads, etc. (Figures 1-3) are potentially hazardous and should be removed as soon as possible.

High-value trees near administrative sites and in these developed recreation areas can be treated with a protective bark spray of carbaryl (Sevin) to prevent the bark beetles from successfully attacking them. Both the trunk and branches of the tree (> 4" in diameter) would have to be sprayed annually until the outbreak collapses. Because pine engraver beetles generally initiate attacks near the top of the stem, it is important that the spray reach this area. This treatment can be effective when trees are weakened and threatened by a temporary bark beetle outbreak. However, preventive bark sprays are not recommended for trees already attacked or affected by serious disease problems or severe injuries.

We encourage proposals for forest insect and disease prevention/suppression funding. Protection of high-value resources, such as developed recreation sites, is considered a Regional priority. To apply for funding the following is required:

1. FS-3400-2 (attached)
2. Project Work Plan (attached)
3. Environmental Analysis, or statement of compliance from Forest
4. Economic Evaluation
5. Form FS-2100-2 must be completed for projects involving the use of a pesticide (FSM 2150 and Supplement 2100-98-1)

The deadline for submitting the proposal package to our office is **October 25, 2002**.

If you have any questions concerning this field summary or applying for prevention/suppression funding, please contact me at (505) 842-3287 or by e-mail at trogers@fs.fed.us.

/s/ David A. Conklin, for
TERRENCE J. ROGERS
Entomologist, Forest Health,
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Enclosures (2)

cc: Bob Yost, Laura A Clayton, Leonard Lucero, Debra Allen-Reid, John Beckley, Gabriel Partido